



## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

### **COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Agenda Item 6.02.C

March 7, 2019

#### **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Terrye Seckinger, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**From:** John Lane, DMA, Director of Academic Affairs

#### **Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen, Fall 2017**

##### **Background**

In 1988, in response to Act 629, the Commission on Higher Education began to report data related to first time entering freshmen for each South Carolina public institution. The act, *The Cutting Edge*, required the Commission to monitor the admission standards at the public colleges and universities to comply as follows:

- In consultation and coordination with the public institutions of higher learning in this state, the State Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that minimal admission standards are maintained by the institutions.
- The Commission, with the institutions, shall monitor the effect of compliance with admission prerequisites that are effective in fall, 1988 (Section 59-104-10[A]).

In addition, in Act 359 of 1996, Section 59-103-45(3), the General Assembly reiterated the importance of the Commission reporting admission standards. For purposes of this report, the following data is reviewed: freshmen applications, acceptances, and enrollment; minimum admission requirements set by individual institutions; mean SAT and ACT scores for freshmen classes; college preparatory course prerequisites compliance; and, information on provisional students.

## Findings

The attached *Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshman, Fall 2017* provides findings from data reported by 12 South Carolina public senior colleges and universities regarding admission standards. In Fall 2017, the public senior institutions admitting freshmen in South Carolina received 109,747 applications from individuals, both in-state and out-of-state, seeking admission as first-time freshmen. Of the first-time freshmen applicants 63.6 percent (69,834) were offered admission, and 27.9 percent (19,479) of applicants offered admission accepted and enrolled. Although a slight decline in the percentage of applicants who accepted and enrolled occurred from 2016 to 2017, the raw number increased by 444 students. This is a one-half percent decrease among the applicants offered admission, and a one percent decrease among those that accepted and enrolled from Fall 2016. The majority of first-time freshmen attending South Carolina's 12 public senior institutions, in Fall 2017, are women (57.3 percent) and the Black/African American men and women composition of first-time freshmen remained relatively unchanged at 16.4 percent.

The number and percentage of applicable first-time freshmen meeting all the college preparatory course prerequisites continue to decrease, after increasing from 2013-2015. In Fall 2017, 85.1 percent of first-time freshmen met all the prerequisites compared to 88.7 percent in 2016, and 91.2 percent in 2015. Data indicates that among the public senior institutions, the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites slightly decreased from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Unlike Fall 2016, only half of the public institutions demonstrate decreases in freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites, while the other half indicates an increase in freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites. Retention rates among students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites are lower for over half of the public senior institutions. Four institutions indicate an increase in freshmen-to-sophomore retention rates for students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites, while seven institutions demonstrate a decrease in retention rates for the same category of students. The retention rate for students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites remained approximately the same for Clemson University.

Most students attending South Carolina public senior institutions report taking the ACT (10,847 students) rather than the SAT (7,504 students) as a college entrance examination in Fall 2017. All but one public senior institutions indicate an increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean between 2016 and 2017. Francis Marion demonstrates a decrease in the average combined SAT/ACT mean.

An institution may offer two types of admission to a degree-seeking student, regular or provisional. The classification is based on whether the applicant meets the institution's minimum admission criteria. Among the public senior institutions, seven of the twelve indicated admitting "provisional" students, yet all have first-time freshmen not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites. Most of the institutions reporting provisional students, again, were comprehensive teaching colleges and universities in South Carolina. Winthrop admitted the largest percentage of provisional freshmen (8.4 percent), followed by USC Upstate (8.0 percent). Although the data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the comprehensive sector continues to fluctuate at several institutions, the levels remain below the 15 percent threshold CHE formally recommended at a commission meeting in August 1997.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen. The required minimum SAT/ACT scores are, generally, lower for students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most institutions. The minimum admission standards of the public senior institutions in South Carolina for Fall 2018 incorporate the use of both GPA and high school class rank. Five institutions

(Clemson, Francis Marion, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate) report intent to apply both methods. USC Beaufort did not report any minimum SAT/ACT scores for high school class rank and GPA. Three institutions (The Citadel, South Carolina State, and USC Aiken) require the same minimum SAT/ACT scores for students regardless of high school class rank, and two institutions required the same minimum SAT/ACT scores for student regardless of GPA (South Carolina State and Lander). In addition to SAT/ACT scores, class rank, and GPA, considerations to include the SAT essay component as an admission requirement are constantly changing. SC public senior institutions no longer consider the essay component of the SAT in admission decisions. However, Clemson, USC Columbia, College of Charleston, and Winthrop still use it as supplemental information in evaluating college readiness.

### **Structure and Methods**

The Annual Report on the 2017 admission standards compliance for first-time entering freshmen at South Carolina public senior institutions is presented in five segments:

- [Part I: Fall 2017 Applications, Acceptances, Enrollments, and Demographics](#)
- [Part II: Fall 2017 Data Related to College Preparatory Course Prerequisites](#)
- [Part III: Fall 2017 SAT and ACT Scores](#)
- [Part IV: Fall 2017 Provisionally Admitted Students](#)
- [Part V: Fall 2018 Minimum Admission Standards](#)

The report relies on the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS) as the primary data source for information presented. Parts II-IV and the enrollment data included in Part I are collected through CHEMIS, and self-reported by each institution. The data is supplied by the institutions no later than November 1 of each academic year. The institutions provide the data for Part V through a separate questionnaire with topic-specific queries. Data verification, generally, occurs between the Commission and the institutions through September of the following academic year.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee favorably commends the report to the Commission.

## ANNUAL REPORT ON ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2017 SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTIONS

### Introduction

The Annual Report on the 2017 admission standards compliance for first-time entering freshmen at South Carolina public senior institutions is presented in five segments:

- [Part I: Fall 2017 Applications, Acceptances, Enrollments, and Demographics](#)
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- [Part III: Fall 2017 SAT and ACT Scores](#)
- [Part IV: Fall 2017 Provisionally Admitted Students](#)
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In accordance with the Commission's commitment to access, affordability, and excellence for South Carolina's post-secondary students, this report details new student access in that it demonstrates efforts to collaborate with South Carolina institutions to expand postsecondary education opportunities for residents, in-state and out-of-state, through the dissemination of information about institutional admission requirements and outcomes.

### Part I: Fall 2017 Applications, Acceptances, Enrollments, and Demographics

South Carolina has 13 public senior institutions: 1) The Citadel; 2) Clemson University; 3) Coastal Carolina University; 4) College of Charleston; 5) Francis Marion University; 6) Lander University; 7) Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC); 8) South Carolina State University; University of South Carolina (USC) in 9) Columbia, 10) Aiken, 11) Beaufort, and 12) Upstate; and 13) Winthrop University. Three of the public senior institutions, Clemson, MUSC, and USC Columbia, are research institutions. However, MUSC only offers undergraduate programs that begin through articulation agreements in the junior year, and thus does not admit freshmen students. As a result, MUSC is not included in the annual report on admission standards.

In Fall 2017, South Carolina's 12 public senior colleges and universities admitting freshmen received 109,747 applications from individuals seeking admission as first-time freshmen. **Table 1** (p. 5) presents the number and percentage of students who applied and accepted and enrolled at each public senior institution. Of the first-time freshmen applicants, 69,834 (63.6 percent) were offered admission. Of those offered admission, 19,479 (27.9 percent) applicants accepted admission and enrolled. This is 3.2 percent less than the 2016 national average of 31.1 percent of 18 – 24 year-old first-time freshmen enrolled in 4-year degree-granting postsecondary institutions, which increased 1.2 percent from 2015 to

2016 (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). Overall, among the public senior institutions, a **decrease** of approximately one-half percent occurred for applicants offered admission (64.1 percent), and a **decrease** of approximately one percent occurred for those accepted and enrolled (29.0 percent) in Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018). Although a slight decline in the percentage of applicants who accepted and enrolled occurred from 2016 to 2017, the raw number increased by 444 students.

<b>Table 1</b> <b>Applications, Acceptances, and Enrollments</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017</b>					
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Number of Applications<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Number of Applicants Offered Admission<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Applicants Offered Admission</b>	<b>Number Accepted and Enrolled</b>	<b>Percent Accepted and Enrolled</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>					
Clemson	26,242	12,380	47.2%	3,649	29.5%
USC Columbia	26,019	18,812	72.3%	5,880	31.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52,261</b>	<b>31,192</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>9,529</b>	<b>30.5%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>					
The Citadel	2,644	2,144	81.1%	687	32.0%
Coastal Carolina	18,563	11,359	61.2%	2,390	21.0%
College of Charleston	11,900	9,574	80.5%	1,840	19.2%
Francis Marion	3,734	2,274	60.9%	688	30.3%
Lander	4,377	2,684	61.3%	765	28.5%
SC State	2,521	1,973	78.3%	591	30.0%
USC Aiken	3,075	1,628	52.9%	573	35.2%
USC Beaufort	2,226	1,430	64.2%	487	34.1%
USC Upstate	3,873	2,220	57.3%	879	39.6%
Winthrop	4,573	3,356	73.4%	1,050	31.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,486</b>	<b>38,642</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>9,950</b>	<b>25.7%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>109,747</b>	<b>69,834</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>27.9%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Reported by the institutions.

South Carolina State University offered admission to the largest percentage of applicants for the past two years, 86.2 and 94.9 percent in 2016 and 2015, respectively (CHE 2018a and 2018b). In 2017, as shown in Table 1, the percentage of applicants offered admission at South Carolina State decreased again to 78.3 percent. The Citadel offered admission to the largest percentage of applicants (81.1 percent) followed by the College of Charleston (80.5 percent). This is a decrease of 1.2 percent for The Citadel and 3.6 percent for the College of Charleston from Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018). Three institutions (USC Columbia, South Carolina State, and Winthrop) offered admission to 70 - 80 percent of applicants. Four institutions (Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, and USC Beaufort) offered admission to 60 - 69 percent of applicants. Two institutions (USC Aiken and USC Upstate) offered admission to 50 - 59 percent of applicants. Unlike the previous two years in which Lander offered admission to the lowest percentage of applicants (CHE, 2018a and 2018b), Clemson offered admission to the lowest percentage of applicants at 47.2 percent in Fall 2017.

A comparison of data from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 indicates the percentage of students accepted and enrolled **increased** for four institutions: USC Columbia (1.4 percent), Coastal Carolina (0.3 percent), South Carolina State (4.4 percent), and USC Upstate (2.8 percent) (CHE, 2018b) but **decreased** at the remaining public senior institutions. Lander experienced the largest decrease in the percentage of

students accepted and enrolled (-13.8 percent) followed by USC Aiken (-8.2 percent) and College of Charleston (-6.6 percent). USC Upstate had the largest percentage of students accept and enroll (39.6 percent). USC Aiken followed with 35.2 percent of the applicants offered admission, accepted and enrolled. The percentage of accepted and enrolled students for Winthrop remained approximately the same as in 2016. Half of the public senior institutions met and exceeded the national average of 31.1 percent for students accepted and enrolled among those offered admission.

Of the institutions that reduced the gap between applicants admitted and those that accepted and enrolled, Clemson, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate had the lowest percentage (17.7 percent each). However, the gap increased for the majority of institutions (seven of twelve). The largest difference between applicants offered admission and those that accepted and enrolled occurred at College of Charleston (61.3 percent). South Carolina State University followed with 48.3 percent. Both institutions experienced a decrease in the percentage of applicants offered admission and ranked similar in Fall 2016, except South Carolina State had the highest difference in the percentage at 60.6 percent followed by College of Charleston at 58.3 percent (CHE, 2018b). Lander experienced the largest shift in the difference between applicants offered admission and those that accepted and enrolled from 2016 to 2017 (an increase of 25.2 percent) (CHE, 2018b). Although the percentage of those offered admission at Lander increased by over 11 percent, the percentage of students that accepted and enrolled decreased by 13.8 percent.

**Table 2** provides a five-year overview of applications, acceptances, and enrollments. The number of applicants increased by 22,002 over the last five years, and the number enrolled increased by 1,541 students. However, the percentage of applicants accepted and enrolled has consistently declined for the last ten years. A **decrease** of 3.3 percent occurred from 2013 to 2017, including 1.1 percent decrease from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Now, the percentage is slightly below the national average (31.1 percent) (U.S. Department of Education, 2018).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Applications</b>	<b>Number of Applicants Offered Admission</b>	<b>Percent of Applicants Offered Admission</b>	<b>Number Accepted and Enrolled</b>	<b>Percent Accepted and Enrolled</b>
<b>2013</b>	87,745	57,492	<b>65.5%</b>	17,938	<b>31.2%</b>
<b>2014</b>	94,735	60,373	<b>63.7%</b>	18,432	<b>30.5%</b>
<b>2015</b>	101,553	63,296	<b>62.3%</b>	18,703	<b>29.5%</b>
<b>2016</b>	102,267	65,588	<b>64.1%</b>	19,035	<b>29.0%</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>109,747</b>	<b>69,834</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>27.9%</b>

## Demographics

The majority of first-time freshmen attending South Carolina's 12 public senior institutions, in Fall 2017, are women (57.3 percent). This is an **increase** of one-half percent from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 (CHE, 2018b). Regarding minority enrollment, the Black/African American men and women composition of first-time freshmen **remained relatively unchanged** at 16.4 percent except for South Carolina State University (94.6 percent) (**Table 2A**, p. 8 - 9). As in Fall 2016, USC Upstate, Francis Marion, and Winthrop University follow with 42.4 percent, 41.2 percent, and 32.2 percent for the number of Black/African

American first-time freshmen, respectively. An increase occurred for both USC Upstate (9.2 percent) and Winthrop (1.3 percent), the largest increase at USC Upstate. However, the percent of Black/African American first-time freshmen at Francis Marion decreased (-0.9 percent).

In-state students account for 61.7 percent of first-time freshmen enrolled in Fall 2017 (**Table 2B**, p. 10 – 11). Of the 37.2 percent out-of-state students attending college in South Carolina as first-time freshmen, the majority are from the neighboring states of North Carolina (5.6 percent) and Georgia (3.7 percent), remaining relatively unchanged from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. New Jersey and Virginia follow at 3.4 percent. The number of first-time freshmen from Maryland is closely behind at 3.3 percent. As in Fall 2016, the majority of out-of-state first-time freshmen attend Clemson (18.7 percent) or USC Columbia (30.2 percent). However, USC experienced an increase in first-time freshmen of 3.3 percent, while Clemson's first-time freshmen enrollment decreased (-0.7 percent). Coastal Carolina (12.3 percent) and College of Charleston (9.5 percent) still follow. Coastal Carolina's percentage of first-freshmen slightly increased (0.5 percent). College of Charleston experienced a decrease of 2.8 percent in first-time freshmen. Within the state of South Carolina, Greenville (6.3 percent), Richland (5.9 percent), Charleston (5.1 percent), York and Lexington (both at 4.3 percent) are the top five counties that comprise in-state first-time freshmen in 2017 (**Table 2C**, p. 12 - 13).

**Table 2A**  
**Enrollment by Race and Gender**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

	Hispanic/ Latino				American Indian / Alaskan Native				Asian				Black/African American				Grand Total
	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	
<b>Research Institutions</b>																	
Clemson	72	60	132	3.6%	0	2	2	0.1%	43	44	87	2.4%	98	132	230	6.3%	3,649
USC Columbia	149	156	305	5.2%	3	10	13	0.2%	88	109	197	3.4%	127	190	317	5.4%	5,880
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>9,529</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>																	
The Citadel	38	7	45	6.6%	4	0	4	0.6%	12	4	16	2.3%	64	13	77	11.2%	687
Coastal Carolina	40	61	101	4.2%	1	4	5	0.2%	5	6	11	0.5%	215	211	426	17.8%	2,390
College of Charleston	32	73	105	5.7%	3	3	6	0.3%	21	20	41	2.2%	24	102	126	6.8%	1,840
Francis Marion	4	13	17	2.5%	2	4	6	0.9%	5	3	8	1.2%	83	200	283	41.1%	688
Lander	7	11	18	2.4%	1	3	4	0.5%	4	4	8	1.0%	57	147	204	26.7%	765
South Carolina State	0	1	1	0.2%	1	0	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	296	263	559	94.6%	591
USC Aiken	12	16	28	4.9%	0	1	1	0.2%	2	4	6	1.0%	49	111	160	27.9%	573
USC Beaufort	13	23	36	7.4%	0	3	3	0.6%	5	5	10	2.1%	24	80	104	21.4%	487
USC Upstate	23	27	50	5.7%	1	1	2	0.2%	10	14	24	2.7%	105	268	373	42.4%	879
Winthrop	17	36	53	5.0%	1	2	3	0.3%	7	11	18	1.7%	79	259	338	32.2%	1,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>9,950</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>1,221</b>	<b>1,976</b>	<b>3,197</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>19,479</b>



**Table 2A**  
**Enrollment by Race and Gender**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

	Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Is.				White				Two or More Races				Other (Non- Resident Alien and Unknown)				Grand Total
	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent of Total	
<b>Research Institutions</b>																	
Clemson	1	0	1	0.0%	1,408	1,642	3,050	83.6%	64	65	129	3.5%	14	4	18	0.5%	3,649
USC Columbia	2	3	5	0.1%	2,111	2,627	4,738	80.6%	81	115	196	3.3%	55	54	109	1.9%	5,880
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>4,269</b>	<b>7,788</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>9,529</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>																	
The Citadel	1	0	1	0.1%	457	39	496	72.2%	39	4	43	6.3%	4	1	5	0.7%	687
Coastal Carolina	1	3	4	0.2%	688	944	1,632	68.3%	80	61	141	5.9%	31	39	70	2.9%	2,390
College of Charleston	1	5	6	0.3%	463	967	1,430	77.7%	22	47	69	3.8%	24	33	57	3.1%	1,840
Francis Marion	0	0	0	0.0%	119	217	336	48.8%	5	15	20	2.9%	14	4	18	2.6%	688
Lander	0	0	0	0.0%	158	325	483	63.1%	11	30	41	5.4%	4	3	7	0.9%	765
South Carolina State	0	0	0	0.0%	5	0	5	0.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	14	11	25	4.2%	591
USC Aiken	1	1	2	0.3%	118	204	322	56.2%	6	26	32	5.6%	15	7	22	3.8%	573
USC Beaufort	0	0	0	0.0%	88	206	294	60.4%	6	22	28	5.7%	3	9	12	2.5%	487
USC Upstate	0	0	0	0.0%	145	221	366	41.6%	13	28	41	4.7%	13	10	23	2.6%	879
Winthrop	1	0	1	0.1%	157	416	573	54.6%	16	38	54	5.1%	7	3	10	1.0%	1,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>3,539</b>	<b>5,937</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>9,950</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>5,917</b>	<b>7,808</b>	<b>13,725</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>19,479</b>

**Table 2B**  
**Enrollment by State of Origin**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

State of Origin	Clemson	USC Columbia	The Citadel	Coastal Carolina	College of Charleston	Francis Marion	Lander	SC State	USC Aiken	USC Beaufort	USC Upstate	Winthrop	State Total	State Percent of Total
Alabama	13	5	3	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	31	0.16%
Alaska	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	0.02%
Arizona	4	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	13	0.07%
Arkansas	1	6	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0.06%
California	30	29	14	6	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	97	0.50%
Colorado	17	8	1	3	9	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	40	0.21%
Connecticut	50	89	3	71	52	0	0	0	0	4	1	1	271	1.39%
Delaware	7	23	4	23	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	69	0.35%
District of Columbia	2	6	0	4	6	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	26	0.13%
Florida	83	95	29	13	30	3	10	5	4	4	9	8	293	1.50%
Georgia	188	297	45	27	49	4	8	44	18	15	8	10	713	3.66%
Hawaii	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0.02%
Idaho	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0.02%
Illinois	61	109	4	29	15	0	0	2	3	0	0	3	226	1.16%
Indiana	11	8	1	7	8	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	39	0.20%
Iowa	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	0.05%
Kansas	3	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	0.06%
Kentucky	9	43	7	16	6	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	84	0.43%
Louisiana	7	6	0	1	14	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	30	0.15%
Maine	2	2	0	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0.08%
Maryland	80	337	7	149	61	2	0	4	1	2	0	5	648	3.33%
Massachusetts	67	140	5	99	66	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	384	1.97%
Michigan	19	10	5	10	5	0	0	2	1	2	0	3	57	0.29%
Minnesota	8	10	1	9	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	32	0.16%
Mississippi	0	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0.04%
Missouri	11	13	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	0.17%
Montana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Nebraska	0	6	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	0.06%
Nevada	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.02%
New Hampshire	10	15	2	27	10	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	69	0.35%
New Jersey	117	279	8	155	87	1	0	1	1	2	0	5	656	3.37%

**Table 2B**  
**Enrollment by State of Origin**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

State of Origin	Clemson	USC Columbia	The Citadel	Coastal Carolina	College of Charleston	Francis Marion	Lander	SC State	USC Aiken	USC Beaufort	USC Upstate	Winthrop	State Total	State Percent of Total
New Mexico	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0.02%
New York	89	175	16	91	60	2	0	1	1	5	0	3	443	2.27%
North Carolina	261	500	51	127	78	16	8	6	1	4	11	33	1,096	5.63%
North Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Ohio	33	111	13	44	14	0	2	0	0	2	2	4	225	1.16%
Oklahoma	4	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	0.06%
Oregon	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.02%
Pennsylvania	84	213	15	143	45	1	2	1	2	3	0	1	510	2.62%
Puerto Rico	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.01%
Rhode Island	5	16	0	7	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43	0.22%
South Carolina	2,133	2,850	381	1,059	1,032	633	716	509	517	423	824	938	12,015	61.68%
South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Tennessee	53	47	9	21	12	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	147	0.75%
Texas	43	35	16	8	20	0	1	0	1	2	1	3	130	0.67%
Utah	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.02%
Vermont	1	5	0	6	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0.10%
Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Virginia	106	297	17	160	57	4	1	2	5	2	3	8	662	3.40%
Washington	5	3	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17	0.09%
West Virginia	2	2	0	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15	0.08%
Wisconsin	4	12	2	8	3	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	33	0.17%
Wyoming	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.01%
APO (Foreign Service)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.01%
Foreign Countries	12	34	8	29	22	19	14	3	8	1	8	10	168	0.86%
Unknown	0	26	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	2	4	0	39	0.20%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,649</b>	<b>5,880</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Institution Percent of Total</b>	<b>18.73%</b>	<b>30.19%</b>	<b>3.53%</b>	<b>12.27%</b>	<b>9.45%</b>	<b>3.53%</b>	<b>3.93%</b>	<b>3.03%</b>	<b>2.94%</b>	<b>2.50%</b>	<b>4.51%</b>	<b>5.39%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

**Table 2C**  
**First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by County**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

County	Clemson	USC Columbia	The Citadel	Coastal Carolina	College of Charleston	Francis Marion	Lander	SC State	USC Aiken	USC Beaufort	USC Upstate	Winthrop	County Total	County Percent of Total
Abbeville	10	2	0	2	0	2	31	1	0	0	3	1	52	0.27%
Aiken	69	68	9	13	13	3	22	5	263	8	6	16	495	2.54%
Allendale	2	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	5	1	0	0	14	0.07%
Anderson	126	57	6	24	18	0	60	1	0	1	22	12	327	1.68%
Bamberg	9	4	0	3	0	2	2	6	6	5	1	3	41	0.21%
Barnwell	4	6	1	1	0	2	7	5	10	4	0	1	41	0.21%
Beaufort	62	93	13	26	49	8	14	11	3	93	10	37	419	2.15%
Berkeley	60	110	28	32	53	14	21	18	11	18	19	56	440	2.26%
Calhoun	8	10	2	5	1	3	2	9	1	0	3	1	45	0.23%
Charleston	221	280	55	55	179	26	22	37	13	38	13	50	989	5.08%
Cherokee	2	26	2	6	12	0	10	3	2	0	24	14	101	0.52%
Chester	8	16	3	4	3	4	7	1	0	1	10	9	66	0.34%
Chesterfield	6	9	0	8	5	19	3	2	1	3	0	17	73	0.37%
Clarendon	6	10	0	9	5	11	0	12	0	3	4	4	64	0.33%
Colleton	10	12	5	2	8	9	4	1	2	19	0	4	76	0.39%
Darlington	22	27	4	20	9	54	9	15	0	5	1	13	179	0.92%
Dillon	6	7	1	7	2	29	4	11	0	1	5	2	75	0.39%
Dorchester	89	122	17	34	65	11	21	24	6	43	9	43	484	2.48%
Edgefield	16	12	1	5	4	0	13	3	24	1	1	5	85	0.44%
Fairfield	2	3	3	6	5	1	5	2	2	2	5	11	47	0.24%
Florence	36	66	21	45	32	163	7	35	5	5	6	17	438	2.25%
Georgetown	17	29	8	46	19	19	5	7	4	5	4	9	172	0.88%
Greenville	366	349	41	37	101	10	71	18	4	8	116	100	1,221	6.27%
Greenwood	24	22	9	9	15	1	70	5	2	0	5	7	169	0.87%
Hampton	10	4	2	3	3	0	0	7	12	5	3	3	52	0.27%
Horry	88	157	6	320	83	41	7	11	9	6	7	19	754	3.87%
Jasper	0	3	1	0	2	3	3	13	0	19	2	1	47	0.24%
Kershaw	26	40	6	6	12	5	3	2	5	5	7	29	146	0.75%
Lancaster	21	30	0	15	19	7	4	7	2	5	15	28	153	0.79%
Laurens	21	18	2	6	9	2	35	3	1	0	11	11	119	0.61%
Lee	5	4	1	4	2	10	2	5	3	0	2	0	38	0.20%
Lexington	127	340	19	47	53	7	62	12	49	34	20	58	828	4.25%

**Table 2C**  
**First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by County**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions, Fall 2017**

<b>County</b>	<b>Clemson</b>	<b>USC Columbia</b>	<b>The Citadel</b>	<b>Coastal Carolina</b>	<b>College of Charleston</b>	<b>Francis Marion</b>	<b>Lander</b>	<b>SC State</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>USC Beaufort</b>	<b>USC Upstate</b>	<b>Winthrop</b>	<b>County Total</b>	<b>County Percent of Total</b>
McCormick	6	0	1	1	0	0	4	0	5	0	1	6	24	0.12%
Marion	4	4	0	20	0	28	4	8	1	1	0	3	73	0.37%
Marlboro	2	1	0	1	2	18	0	8	3	0	4	0	39	0.20%
Newberry	14	23	4	3	2	0	8	3	3	1	8	9	78	0.40%
Oconee	42	27	1	10	12	0	22	5	1	1	3	3	127	0.65%
Orangeburg	19	15	6	31	6	10	8	58	13	15	11	9	201	1.03%
Pickens	68	21	8	8	10	1	5	1	1	0	14	20	157	0.81%
Richland	161	409	44	84	72	38	45	73	29	19	90	88	1,152	5.91%
Saluda	8	8	1	2	0	1	9	2	5	2	2	1	41	0.21%
Spartanburg	124	122	20	24	50	5	50	19	1	4	255	60	734	3.77%
Sumter	31	37	8	22	10	28	5	9	3	6	8	21	188	0.97%
Union	3	10	0	2	2	0	8	3	2	0	9	5	44	0.23%
Williamsburg	5	7	3	7	4	22	0	9	0	1	3	7	68	0.35%
York	167	228	19	42	81	16	21	18	5	35	82	125	839	4.31%
Out-Of-State	38	2970	298	1302	783	36	35	79	44	61	43	102	5,791	29.73%
Foreign	0	34	8	29	22	19	14	3	8	1	8	10	156	0.80%
Unknown	1478	26	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	2	4	0	1,517	7.79%
<b>Institution Total</b>	<b>3,649</b>	<b>5,880</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Institution Percent of Total</b>	<b>18.73%</b>	<b>30.19%</b>	<b>3.53%</b>	<b>12.27%</b>	<b>9.45%</b>	<b>3.53%</b>	<b>3.93%</b>	<b>3.03%</b>	<b>2.94%</b>	<b>2.50%</b>	<b>4.51%</b>	<b>5.39%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

## Part II: Fall 2017 Data Related to College Preparatory Course Prerequisites

Since Fall 1988, public senior institutions in South Carolina require that applicants complete certain high school courses prior to entering college. The Commission reviews, vets, and updates the list of course prerequisites to ensure alignment with minimal institution requirements. The following table details the college preparatory course prerequisites implemented in Fall 2011, and valid through Fall 2018 (CHE 2006, 2012). The requirements for first-time freshmen beginning in Fall 2019 were revised, approved, and distributed to the South Carolina Department of Education and made available to the public in Spring 2015 (CHE, 2015). The next revision cycle is scheduled to begin in Fall 2020.

<b><i>College Preparatory Course Prerequisites 2011</i></b>
<b>Four (4) Units of English:</b> At least two units must have strong grammar and composition components, at least one must be in English literature, and at least one must be in American literature. Completion of College Preparatory English I, II, III, and IV will meet this criterion.
<b>Four (4) Units of Mathematics:</b> These include Algebra I (for which Applied Mathematics I and II may count together as a substitute, if a student successfully completes Algebra II), Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics course should be selected from among Algebra III/trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, discrete mathematics, or a capstone mathematics course and should be taken during the senior year.
<b>Three (3) Units of Laboratory Science:</b> Two units must be taken in two different fields of the physical or life sciences and selected from among biology, chemistry, or physics. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, or physics) or from any laboratory science for which biology and/or chemistry is a prerequisite. Courses in earth science, general physical science, or introductory or general environmental science for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It is strongly recommended that students take physical science (taught as a laboratory science) as a prerequisite to the three required units of laboratory science outlined in this section. It is also strongly recommended that students desiring to pursue careers in science, mathematics, engineering or technology take one course in all three fields.
<b>Two (2) Units of the same Foreign Language.</b>
<b>Three (3) Units of Social Science:</b> One unit of U.S. History is required; a half unit of Economics and a half unit in Government are strongly recommended.
<b>One (1) Unit of Elective:</b> One unit must be taken as an elective. A college preparatory course in Computer Science (i.e., one involving significant programming content, not simply keyboarding) is strongly recommended for this elective. Other acceptable electives include college preparatory courses in English; fine arts; foreign languages; social science; humanities; laboratory science (excluding earth science, general physical science, general environmental science, and other introductory science courses for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite); or mathematics above the level of Algebra II.
<b>One (1) Unit of Physical Education or ROTC.</b>
<b>One (1) Unit of Fine Arts:</b> One unit in Appreciation of, History of, or Performance in one of the fine arts.

Each institution may also make exceptions in admitting 1) students who do not meet all of the prerequisites in cases where the failure to meet one or more prerequisites is due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student, or 2) students who have taken the Tech Prep (Applied Academics) courses rather than the required college preparatory curriculum described above and who meet all other institutional admission criteria (CHE 2006, 2015). Thus, some variation of admission requirements from one college to the next is normative. The College Board (n.d.) states “there’s no magic formula when it comes to college admission decisions” and that many factors influence admission.

**Table 3** (p. 16) presents the number and percentage of applicable first-time freshmen meeting all the college preparatory course prerequisites, also referred to as compliance rate. The proportion of all applicable first-time freshmen meeting all the prerequisites was on a steady incline from 2013 to 2015 (CHE 2018a). After a decrease from 91.7 percent in 2012 to 85.3 percent in 2013, there was an increase to 85.4 percent in 2014, and a subsequent increase to 91.2 percent in 2015. However, in Fall 2016, the

percentage of students meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites decreased to 88.7 percent (CHE, 2018b). The **decline continues** with 85.1 percent of first-time freshmen meeting all the college preparatory course prerequisites in Fall 2017. The rate continues to fall below the 1999 average of 98.15 percent. Of the public senior institutions, South Carolina State University is the only institution that met and exceeded the 1999 average with 99.0 percent of students meeting the college course prerequisites in Fall 2017. College of Charleston experienced the next highest percentage of students meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites at 96.9 percent, followed by Coastal Carolina at 95.1 percent.

The prerequisites for first-time freshmen that do not meet the requirements are either waived or additional courses are required. In Fall 2017, 1,468 in-state students did not meet the requirements compared to 1,559 out-of-state students for the public senior institutions and USC two-year campuses. The number of students not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites **increased** for both in-state (59.9 percent increase) and out-of-state (23.5 percent increase) first-time freshmen as in Fall 2016 (**Tables 3A and 3B**, p. 19 - 20) (CHE, 2018b). Again, all but one of the public senior institutions, Francis Marion, waived the prerequisites. Instead, Francis Marion required students not meeting the prerequisites to take additional courses. In Fall 2015, four in-state students were required to take additional courses. However, twelve (12) in-state students and four (4) out-of-state students contributed to the 16 first-time freshmen not meeting the prerequisites and required to take additional courses in Fall 2016, a 400% percent increase from the previous year (CHE, 2018b). This number doubled in Fall 2017. Twenty-six (26) in-state students and nine (9) out-of-state students make up the 35 first-time freshmen not meeting the prerequisites and required to take additional courses. For the second year in a row, the number of in-state students not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites is higher than out-of-state students for seven of the twelve public senior institutions (Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, USC Upstate, and Winthrop), and the same institutions as in Fall 2016.

**Table 3**  
**Percent of Applicable<sup>1</sup> First-Time Freshmen Meeting College Preparatory Course Prerequisites**

Institution	2014 <sup>3</sup>			2015			2016			2017			Percentage Diff. Comparing 2014 and 2017
	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
<b>Research Institutions</b>													
Clemson	3,475	2,966	<b>85.4%</b>	3,447	3,099	<b>89.9%</b>	3,684	3,290	<b>89.3%</b>	3,649	3,245	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
USC Columbia	4,927	3,963	<b>80.4%</b>	5,073	4,424	<b>87.2%</b>	5,040	4,147	<b>82.3%</b>	5,845	4,575	<b>78.3%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,402</b>	<b>6,929</b>	<b>82.5%</b>	<b>8,520</b>	<b>7,523</b>	<b>88.3%</b>	<b>8,724</b>	<b>7,437</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>9,494</b>	<b>7,820</b>	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>													
The Citadel	539	479	<b>88.9%</b>	602	557	<b>92.5%</b>	734	678	<b>92.4%</b>	687	648	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
Coastal Carolina	2,348	2,280	<b>97.1%</b>	2,331	2,254	<b>96.7%</b>	2,211	2,130	<b>96.3%</b>	2,346	2,230	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>
College of Charleston	2,164	2,120	<b>98.0%</b>	2,226	2,182	<b>98.0%</b>	2,340	2,281	<b>97.5%</b>	1,832	1,776	<b>96.9%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>
Francis Marion	758	723	<b>95.4%</b>	739	735	<b>99.5%</b>	729	686	<b>94.1%</b>	688	653	<b>94.9%</b>	<b>-0.5%</b>
Lander	533	497	<b>93.2%</b>	541	502	<b>92.8%</b>	600	556	<b>92.7%</b>	750	692	<b>92.3%</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
SC State	641	570	<b>88.9%</b>	494	430	<b>87.0%</b>	628	600	<b>95.5%</b>	591	585	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
USC Aiken	605	528	<b>87.3%</b>	570	505	<b>88.6%</b>	598	518	<b>86.6%</b>	565	495	<b>87.6%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
USC Beaufort	388	275	<b>70.9%</b>	460	387	<b>84.1%</b>	475	363	<b>76.4%</b>	486	397	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>
USC Upstate	784	655	<b>83.5%</b>	779	697	<b>89.5%</b>	745	617	<b>82.8%</b>	871	741	<b>85.1%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
Winthrop	1,011	955	<b>94.5%</b>	1,081	1,004	<b>92.9%</b>	1,055	971	<b>92.0%</b>	1,039	933	<b>89.8%</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,771</b>	<b>9,082</b>	<b>92.9%</b>	<b>9,823</b>	<b>9,253</b>	<b>94.2%</b>	<b>10,115</b>	<b>9,400</b>	<b>92.9%</b>	<b>9,855</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>92.8%</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	<b>18,173</b>	<b>16,011</b>	<b>88.1%</b>	<b>18,343</b>	<b>16,776</b>	<b>91.5%</b>	<b>18,839</b>	<b>16,837</b>	<b>89.4%</b>	<b>19,349</b>	<b>16,970</b>	<b>87.7%</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC<sup>2</sup></b>													
USC Lancaster	319	145	<b>45.5%</b>	100	36	<b>36.0%</b>	277	147	<b>53.1%</b>	319	183	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>
USC Salkehatchie	256	3	<b>1.2%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	8	8	<b>100.0%</b>	235	1	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>
USC Sumter	216	151	<b>69.9%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	212	164	<b>77.4%</b>	264	166	<b>62.9%</b>	<b>-7.0%</b>
USC-Union	134	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	180	0	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Total USC Two-Year</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>64.2%</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19,098</b>	<b>16,310</b>	<b>85.4%</b>	<b>18,443</b>	<b>16,812</b>	<b>91.2%</b>	<b>19,336</b>	<b>17,156</b>	<b>88.7%</b>	<b>20,347</b>	<b>17,320</b>	<b>85.1%</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

<sup>2</sup> At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable to those students accepted and classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready.

<sup>3</sup> As reported in *Annual report on admission standards for first-time entering freshmen, Fall 2014* (CHE, 2017).



## **Institutional Findings**

The compliance rate is the number and percentage of applicable first-time freshmen meeting all the college preparatory course prerequisites. As shown in Table 3 (p. 16), for Fall 2017, six public senior institutions (The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, and South Carolina State), the same number as in 2015 and one less than in 2016, indicate a compliance rate between 90 - 100 percent. Five public senior institutions (Clemson, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, USC Upstate, and Winthrop) indicate a compliance rate between 80 – 90 percent. USC Columbia is the only public senior institution to demonstrate a compliance rate less than 80 percent. Unlike Fall 2016, only half of the public institutions (Clemson, USC Columbia, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Lander, and Winthrop) indicate a slight **decrease** in the compliance rate from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. The compliance rate for The Citadel, Francis Marion, South Carolina State University, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, and USC Upstate **increased**. As previously mentioned, South Carolina State University has the highest compliance rate at 99.0 percent.

USC Beaufort no longer has the lowest compliance rate among the public senior institutions, rebounding from a compliance rate of 76.4 percent in 2016 to 81.7 percent in 2017 and indicating the largest increase in the compliance rate at 5.3 percent. The increase in compliance is accompanied by an increase in USC Beaufort's overall retention rate (Table 3C, p. 23). However, the lowest compliance rate among the public senior institutions in 2017 is at USC Columbia (78.3 percent). The data received from USC Columbia reveals the majority of first-time freshmen who did not meet the college preparatory prerequisites occurred in the areas of Fine Arts (70.4 percent) followed by Physical Education (7.9 percent), English (5.9 percent), and Lab Science (5.5 percent). In 2016, the majority of first-time freshmen at USC Columbia lacking requirements was, again, in Fine Arts (62.2 percent). In addition, out-of-state students at USC Columbia account for the majority of first-time freshmen students not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites (77.8 percent) in Fall 2017, but this is 5.7 percent less than in Fall 2016. Historically, more in-state students attending USC Columbia meet the college preparatory course prerequisites than out-of-state students (CHE, 2018a and 2018b).

Fine Arts is the primary area in which prerequisites are not met for only half of the six public senior institutions reporting a lower compliance rate (Clemson, USC Columbia, and Coastal Carolina) in Fall 2017. The primary area in which prerequisites are not met at the College of Charleston is Foreign Language (37.5 percent). Lab Science is the primary area in which prerequisites are not met for Lander (30.9 percent) and Winthrop (43.9 percent). However, Math and Physical Education also emerged as areas in which prerequisites are not met for some institutions with lower compliance.

Previous reports indicate the rate of compliance among “out-of-state” students contributed to a lower overall compliance rate (CHE 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018a, and 2018b). Considering admission requirements can vary from one college to the next within and across state lines, a higher compliance rate among in-state students is expected since the South Carolina prerequisites are disseminated to the South Carolina K-12 system to use as a resource in preparing students for college. In Fall 2017 data, out-of-state students continue to represent a higher percentage of first-time freshmen not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites. **Table 3A** (p. 19) and **Table 3B** (p. 20) represent the number of applicable first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites “In-State” and “Out-of-State”, respectively. A comparison between the last column of both Table 3A and Table 3B in Fall 2017 indicates the compliance rate of first-time in-state freshmen is higher than for out-of-state freshmen for all but one public senior institution, South Carolina State University. The same occurred in Fall 2016. The

compliance rate for out-of-state first-time freshmen attending South Carolina State University is 1.2 percent higher than in-state students. Overall, a decrease in the compliance rate occurred among both in-state (-3.9 percent) and out-of-state students (-3.3 percent), but the decrease is slightly higher among in-state students. The amount of the decrease in compliance remains larger among out-of-state students, ranging from 0.1 percent to 15.7 percent, with USC Upstate indicating the largest percentage. Therefore, the decrease in compliance reported in Table 3 is likely attributed to out-of-state students as a result of larger decreases from Fall 2014 to Fall 2017. Six institutions experienced a decrease in the compliance rate among both in-state and out-of-state students in Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018b). In 2017, only two institutions, USC Columbia and Winthrop experienced a decrease in the compliance rate among both in-state and out-of-state students. USC Columbia was among those institutions with a decrease in compliance rate among both in-state and out-of-state students in Fall 2016 and Fall 2017. South Carolina State University and USC Beaufort are the only institutions to experience an increase in the compliance rate among both in-state and out-of-state students in Fall 2017.

Four senior public institutions (The Citadel, Francis Marion, South Carolina State, and USC Beaufort) increased the compliance rate among out-of-state students in 2017. Four senior public institutions report a compliance rate for out-of-state students below the average of 79.0 percent for all institutions, ranging from 46.0 percent to 67.4 percent. This is a slight improvement in compliance among out-of-state students from the Fall 2016 rate, in which the lowest compliance was 45.1 percent. However, among the six public senior institutions with an overall lower compliance rate in Fall 2017 compared to Fall 2016 (Clemson, USC Columbia, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Lander, and Winthrop), out-of-state students accounted for the majority of first-time freshmen not meeting the prerequisites.

**Table 3A**  
**Percent of Applicable<sup>1</sup> First-Time Freshmen Meeting College Preparatory Course Prerequisites (In-State)**

Institution	2014 <sup>3</sup>			2015			2016			2017			Percentage Diff. Comparing 2014 and 2017
	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
<b>Research Institutions</b>													
Clemson	2,104	1,895	90.1%	2,100	1,993	94.9%	2,282	2,118	92.8%	2,133	1,999	93.7%	3.6%
USC Columbia	2,460	2,165	88.0%	2,552	2,444	95.8%	2,389	2,244	93.9%	2,849	2,555	89.7%	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	4,564	4,060	89.0%	4,652	4,437	95.4%	4,671	4,362	93.4%	4,982	4,554	91.4%	2.4%
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>													
The Citadel	275	259	94.2%	311	303	97.4%	401	382	95.3%	381	371	97.4%	3.2%
Coastal Carolina	966	952	98.6%	939	917	97.7%	980	950	96.9%	1,048	1,017	97.0%	-1.6%
College of Charleston	1,195	1,185	99.2%	1,245	1,234	99.1%	1,366	1,353	99.0%	1,026	1,009	98.3%	-0.9%
Francis Marion	715	683	95.5%	707	703	99.4%	686	652	95.0%	633	607	95.9%	0.4%
Lander	508	476	93.7%	504	470	93.3%	563	523	92.9%	714	662	92.7%	-1.0%
SC State	445	388	87.2%	370	324	87.6%	517	493	95.4%	509	503	98.8%	11.6%
USC Aiken	537	481	89.6%	513	467	91.0%	528	471	89.2%	517	455	88.0%	-1.6%
USC Beaufort	324	253	78.1%	398	346	86.9%	393	326	83.0%	423	360	85.1%	7.0%
USC Upstate	712	610	85.7%	746	672	90.1%	689	582	84.5%	824	719	87.3%	1.6%
Winthrop	917	880	96.0%	992	949	95.7%	951	897	94.3%	937	863	92.1%	-3.9%
<b>Total</b>	6,594	6,167	93.5%	6,725	6,385	94.9%	7,074	6,629	93.7%	7,012	6,566	93.6%	0.1%
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	11,158	10,227	91.7%	11,377	10,822	95.1%	11,745	10,991	93.6%	11,994	11,120	92.7%	1.0%
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC<sup>2</sup></b>													
USC Lancaster	308	143	46.4%	89	34	38.2%	269	144	53.5%	307	182	59.3%	12.9%
USC Salkehatchie	4	3	75.0%	0	0	0.0%	8	8	100.0%	221	1	0.5%	-74.5%
USC Sumter	198	149	75.3%	0	0	0.0%	201	162	80.6%	233	157	67.4%	-7.9%
USC-Union	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	173	0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total USC Two-Year</b>	510	295	57.8%	89	34	38.2%	478	314	65.7%	934	340	36.4%	-21.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	11,668	10,522	90.2%	11,466	10,856	94.7%	12,223	11,305	92.5%	12,928	11,460	88.6%	-1.6%

<sup>1</sup> Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

<sup>2</sup> At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable to those students accepted and classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready.

<sup>3</sup> As reported in *Annual report on admission standards for first-time entering freshmen, Fall 2014* (CHE, 2017).

**Table 3B**  
**Percent of Applicable<sup>1</sup> First-Time Freshmen Meeting College Preparatory Course Prerequisites (Out-of-State)**

Institution	2014 <sup>3</sup>			2015			2016			2017			Percentage Diff. Comparing 2014 and 2017
	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshman	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
<b>Research Institutions</b>													
Clemson	1,371	1,071	<b>78.1%</b>	1,347	1,106	<b>82.1%</b>	1,402	1,172	<b>83.6%</b>	1,516	1,246	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
USC Columbia	2,455	1,798	<b>73.2%</b>	2,521	1,980	<b>78.5%</b>	2,651	1,903	<b>71.8%</b>	2,996	2,020	<b>67.4%</b>	<b>-5.8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,826</b>	<b>2,869</b>	<b>75.0%</b>	<b>3,868</b>	<b>3,086</b>	<b>79.8%</b>	<b>4,053</b>	<b>3,075</b>	<b>75.9%</b>	<b>4,512</b>	<b>3,266</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>													
The Citadel	264	220	<b>83.3%</b>	291	254	<b>87.3%</b>	333	296	<b>88.9%</b>	306	277	<b>90.5%</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
Coastal Carolina	1,382	1,328	<b>96.1%</b>	1392	1337	<b>96.0%</b>	1,231	1,180	<b>95.9%</b>	1,298	1,213	<b>93.5%</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>
College of Charleston	969	935	<b>96.5%</b>	981	948	<b>96.6%</b>	974	928	<b>95.3%</b>	806	767	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
Francis Marion	43	40	<b>93.0%</b>	32	32	<b>100.0%</b>	43	34	<b>79.1%</b>	55	46	<b>83.6%</b>	<b>-9.4%</b>
Lander	25	21	<b>84.0%</b>	37	32	<b>86.5%</b>	37	33	<b>89.2%</b>	36	30	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>
SC State	196	182	<b>92.9%</b>	124	106	<b>85.5%</b>	111	107	<b>96.4%</b>	82	82	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
USC Aiken	66	47	<b>71.2%</b>	57	38	<b>66.7%</b>	70	47	<b>67.1%</b>	48	40	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
USC Beaufort	61	22	<b>36.1%</b>	62	41	<b>66.1%</b>	82	37	<b>45.1%</b>	63	37	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>22.6%</b>
USC Upstate	62	45	<b>72.6%</b>	33	25	<b>75.8%</b>	56	35	<b>62.5%</b>	47	22	<b>46.8%</b>	<b>-25.8%</b>
Winthrop	94	75	<b>79.8%</b>	89	55	<b>61.8%</b>	104	74	<b>71.2%</b>	102	70	<b>68.6%</b>	<b>-11.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,162</b>	<b>2,915</b>	<b>92.2%</b>	<b>3,098</b>	<b>2,868</b>	<b>92.6%</b>	<b>3,041</b>	<b>2,771</b>	<b>91.1%</b>	<b>2,843</b>	<b>2,584</b>	<b>90.9%</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	<b>6,988</b>	<b>5,784</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>6,966</b>	<b>5,954</b>	<b>85.5%</b>	<b>7,094</b>	<b>5,846</b>	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>7,355</b>	<b>5,850</b>	<b>79.5%</b>	<b>-3.3%</b>
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC<sup>2</sup></b>													
USC Lancaster	6	2	<b>33.3%</b>	11	2	<b>18.2%</b>	8	3	<b>37.5%</b>	12	1	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>-25.0%</b>
USC Salkehatchie	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	14	0	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
USC Sumter	5	2	<b>40.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	11	2	<b>18.2%</b>	31	9	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>-11.0%</b>
USC-Union	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	7	0	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Total USC Two-Year</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>-20.8%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,999</b>	<b>5,788</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>6,977</b>	<b>5,956</b>	<b>85.4%</b>	<b>7,113</b>	<b>5,851</b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>7,419</b>	<b>5,860</b>	<b>79.0%</b>	<b>-3.7%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

<sup>2</sup> At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable to those students accepted and classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready.

<sup>3</sup> As reported in *Annual report on admission standards for first-time entering freshmen, Fall 2014* (CHE, 2017).

## Retention and Compliance

The *Annual Report on Admission Standards* also examines the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of first-time freshmen in relationship to the college preparatory course prerequisite compliance data for the last five years. Retention rate, reported by each institution, is “the rate at which entering freshmen in a fall semester enroll the following fall semester” at the same institution (The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems [NCHEMS], 2015). NCHEMS reported the Fall 2015 national retention rate was 79.8 percent and steadily increased since 2009. NCHEMS also reported the Fall 2015 retention rate for South Carolina was 76.6 percent. South Carolina retention rates usually fall below the national average but began to increase in 2012 (74.1 percent) after a slight decline in 2011 (73.7 percent) from a rate of 73.9 percent in 2010 and 75.0 percent in 2009. The Fall 2015 rate was also a slight decline from the Fall 2014 rate of 76.8 percent. The retention rates for Fall 2016 and Fall 2017, including disaggregation by state, are not yet available. As a result, this report will utilize the 2015 NCHEMS data for retention comparisons.

**Table 3C** (p. 23) shows the overall retention rate and the retention rate of first-time freshmen who meet and who did not meet the recommended college preparatory course prerequisites for the South Carolina public senior institutions. The average retention rate among the 12 public senior institutions is 80.0 percent, which is only slightly above the national retention rate and above the state retention rate of South Carolina in Fall 2015 NCHEMS data, and slightly above the Fall 2016 rate of 79.7 percent highlighted in the *Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen, Fall 2016* (CHE, 2018b). As in Fall 2016, the overall retention rate of the same eight public senior institutions (Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, USC Upstate, and Winthrop) fall below both the 2015 state and national retention rates (CHE, 2018b). Three institutions (Clemson, USC Columbia, and The Citadel) exceeded the 2015 NCHEMS state and national retention rates in Fall 2017. The overall retention rate for College of Charleston is 79.3 percent, slightly below the average retention rate for the 2015 NCHEMS national and Fall 2017 data but above the 2015 NCHEMS South Carolina retention rate. Clemson, again, demonstrates the highest retention rate at 92.6 percent, followed by USC Columbia (88.0 percent) and The Citadel (84.6 percent). Lander (63.5 percent) and Francis Marion (64.5 percent) indicate the lowest retention rates.

The overall retention rate among the public senior institutions in South Carolina continues to **remain constant** at approximately 80 percent from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 (CHE, 2018b). Four institutions (USC Columbia, The Citadel, USC Beaufort, and Winthrop) **increased** the overall retention rate of first-time freshmen from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. The overall retention rate remained approximately the same for Clemson with a slight increase of 0.4 percent, and seven institutions (Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate) indicate a **decrease** in retention rates from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Six of the seven institutions, all but Francis Marion, experienced a decrease for both first-time freshmen meeting and not meeting the college preparatory prerequisites.

Based on previous data, first-time freshmen that meet the college preparatory course prerequisites are more likely to remain in college and transition to sophomore year compared to students who did not meet the requirements (CHE 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018a, and 2018b). Eight of the 12 public senior institutions demonstrate a **decreased** retention rate for students who did not meet the college preparatory course requirements (Clemson, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate). This is two more institutions than in Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018b). The decrease in the retention rate for Lander (-0.4 percent) was less than half a percent. The

remaining four (USC Columbia, Francis Marion, USC Beaufort, and Winthrop) indicate an **increased** rate of retention for students who did not meet the high school course requirements. Lander (21.9 percent) presents the largest difference in retention between students who meet and do not meet the college preparatory requirements followed by South Carolina State University (13.6 percent) and USC Upstate (13.1 percent). USC Columbia indicates the smallest difference at 1.7 percent. Although still below the percentage of first-time freshmen who meet the college preparatory course requirements, three institutions experienced a large increase in the retention rate for students who did not meet the high school course requirements compared to Fall 2016. Francis Marion increased the retention rate by 37.8 percent followed by Winthrop University (14.3 percent) and USC Beaufort (12.0 percent).

Although it is expected for first-time freshmen meeting the college preparatory course requirements to have a higher retention rate than students not meeting the requirements, retention and increasing retention of all admitted students is the desired outcome. Five public senior institutions (Clemson, USC Columbia, The Citadel, USC Beaufort, and Winthrop), two institutions fewer than the previous year, indicate an **increase** in the retention rate among students meeting the requirements from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 (CHE, 2018b). The retention rate **decreased** for the remaining institutions, but only slightly for USC Aiken and USC Upstate (0.6 percent). However, retention efforts often cost in time and money to students, institutions, and the government (Simpson, 2005). Students who transfer to another school or drop out after freshmen year can negatively impact the institution's retention rate, one of the legitimate metrics related to the success of an institution's performance, as well as their bottom line. Ultimately institutions are interested in practices that cover costs but provide a financial return and increase student success. On the other hand, from the perspective of students and parents, retention rates are indicators of satisfaction with the school, academic and personal support, and the potential return on investment in attending a particular institution.

Again, over half of the public senior institutions experienced an overall lower retention rate from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Only one of the seven institutions, Francis Marion, indicates an increase in the retention rate among students not meeting the requirements. The remaining institutions (Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate) demonstrate a lower retention rate among this subgroup with the rate of Lander remaining relatively the same (43.6 percent to 43.2 percent). USC Columbia, USC Beaufort, and Winthrop experienced an increase in retention among students meeting and not meeting the college preparatory requirements. On average, there was only a 5.2 percent difference in retention rates for students meeting the prerequisites compared to those not meeting the prerequisites, an increase from the 2.1 percent and 1.6 percent difference in 2016 and 2015, respectively (CHE, 2018a and 2018b).

**Table 3C**  
**Fall 2016 First-Time Freshmen Not Meeting High School Prerequisites Retained at Same Institution in Fall 2017**  
**S.C. Public Senior Institutions**

Institution			Applicable Freshmen Meeting Prerequisites			Applicable Freshmen Not Meeting Prerequisites		
Research Institutions	Applicable Freshmen	Total Retention Fall 2017	Number	Retained	Percentage	Number	Retained	Percentage
Clemson	3,684	92.6%	3,290	3,056	92.9%	394	356	90.4%
USC Columbia	5,047	88.0%	4,147	3,663	88.3%	900	780	86.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,731</b>	<b>90.3%</b>	<b>7,437</b>	<b>6,719</b>	<b>90.6%</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>								
The Citadel	734	84.6%	678	576	85.0%	56	45	80.4%
Coastal Carolina	2,212	67.0%	2,130	1,434	67.3%	82	49	59.8%
College of Charleston	2,340	77.7%	2,281	1,773	77.7%	59	46	78.0%
Francis Marion	729	64.5%	686	443	64.6%	43	27	62.8%
Lander University	600	63.5%	556	362	65.1%	44	19	43.2%
SC State	628	66.6%	600	403	67.2%	28	15	53.6%
USC Aiken	601	68.1%	518	358	69.1%	83	51	61.4%
USC Beaufort	476	61.8%	363	231	63.6%	113	63	55.8%
USC Upstate	751	66.7%	617	426	69.0%	134	75	56.0%
Winthrop	1,055	76.4%	971	746	76.8%	84	60	71.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,126</b>	<b>69.7%</b>	<b>9,400</b>	<b>6,752</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>62.2%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18,857</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>16,837</b>	<b>13,471</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>1,586</b>	<b>75.4%</b>

### Part III: Fall 2017 SAT and ACT Scores

The *Annual Report on Admission Standards* highlights scores from the average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) assessments for all first-time entering freshmen as indicators of academic preparation and college readiness. In Fall 2017, the majority of students attending South Carolina public senior institutions report taking the ACT (10,847 students) rather than the SAT (7,504 students) as a college entrance examination, contradicting the pattern prior to and including Fall 2015 but congruent with Fall 2016. The percentage of first-time freshmen to take both the SAT and ACT is 3.9 (777 students), nearly a three percent **increase** from Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018b), and 1.8 percent (351 students) did not take either assessment.

The scores of students who report only ACT scores are converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT-SAT concordance tables developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and The College Board (The College Board, 2015b). The converted scores are then averaged with the SAT scores to construct an SAT/ACT combined mean. When ACT scores are converted into SAT equivalencies and combined into the mean, the SAT/ACT combined mean is slightly lower than the SAT combined mean excluding ACT scores (except for the research institutions).

In general, the combined SAT/ACT mean is lower because more than one SAT combined score (verbal and math) converts into the same ACT score, whereas only one ACT composite score converts to an SAT combined score except at the lowest end of the range. Depending on the range within students' scores fall (including ACT/SAT equivalencies in the calculation of the mean), a student's score could either

increase or decrease the combined mean at that institution (The College Board, 2015c). The SAT was redesigned in 2015 (introduced in 2016) to better prepare students for success in all aspects of life, including college and careers (The College Board, 2015c). The major differences are in format and scoring. The old SAT had three sections: 1) Critical Reading, 2) Mathematics, and 3) Writing (scores not always factored into admissions) reporting on a scale ranging from 400 – 1600. The redesigned (new) SAT reports a total score that is the sum of two section scores: 1) Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and 2) Math. The Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section is the sum of the Reading Test score and the Writing and Language Test score multiplied by 10. Each of the two section scores is reported on a scale ranging from 200 to 800. Thus, the total score remains on a scale ranging from 400 to 1600, but the scores for the Essay component are reported separately and not factored into the total score. The changes were made effective for those entering in college in Fall 2017.

For this report, analysis is based on the national and state overall mean SAT scores for 2017 college-bound seniors and using their most recent of any scores through June 2017 and the redesigned test structure. Nationally, the average mean scores are 1060 without the essay section and 1082 with the essay section (The College Board, 2017). The state level overall mean scores were not available at the time of this report.

The South Carolina institutions in which students seek admission vary in whether the essay section/score is required and/or factored into admission decisions (CHE, 2017, 2018a, and 2018b). **Table 4** (p. 25) details the following for Fall 2017 first-time freshmen attending public senior institutions in South Carolina by sector: 1) SAT/ACT combined mean, 2) combined mean for SAT scores only, and 3) percentage of students reporting ACT scores only. Again, Clemson indicated the highest average SAT/ACT (1307) and SAT (1302) combined means (an increase of 43 and 59 points, respectively), followed by USC Columbia with average scores of 1244 and 1255, an increase of 8 and 40 points, respectively. South Carolina State, again, indicated the lowest average SAT/ACT (861) and SAT (919) combined means, and indicated a decrease in the percentage of students reporting an ACT score (79.0 percent in Fall 2016 to 68.2 percent in Fall 2017). This represents an increase of 74 and 135 points, respectively, in the SAT/ACT and SAT combined means, but a 10.8 percent increase among students reporting an ACT score.

In comparing the overall national SAT means with the SAT means of the South Carolina senior public institutions, the essay section has little influence on how the results of each institution are viewed. Based on the 2016 Admission Standards annual report, only three of the institutions (Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, and USC Upstate) factored the writing component into Fall 2017 admissions (CHE, 2018b). The remaining institutions (Clemson, USC Columbia, The Citadel, College of Charleston Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, and Winthrop) did not. Clemson, USC Columbia, Coastal Carolina, and College of Charleston used the essay component as supplemental information, if provided.

The SAT scores reported by each public senior institution do not include the essay score. In comparing the overall national means, without the essay, to the SAT means of the South Carolina senior public institutions, the average score of six institutions (Clemson, USC Columbia, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, and Winthrop) exceeds the national average. The same six institutions exceeded the national, and state average, in Fall 2016 (CHE, 2018b). Only the SAT means of Clemson and USC Columbia exceed the state average of 1166. The remaining six institutions (Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, and USC Upstate) fall below the national average.



<b>Table 4</b> <b>SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen, Fall 2017<sup>1</sup></b> <b>(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Aged 22 and Above Students)</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions and USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>			
<b>Institution</b>	<b>SAT &amp; ACT Combined Mean<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>SAT (Only) Combined Mean</b>	<b>% Reporting ACT Score</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>			
Clemson	1307	1302	60.5%
USC Columbia	1244	1255	58.0%
<b>Average Research Institutions</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>59.0%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>			
The Citadel	1100	1121	49.5%
Coastal Carolina	1057	1093	54.0%
College of Charleston	1148	1161	53.6%
Francis Marion	943	1044	77.5%
Lander	1014	1036	45.2%
S.C. State	861	919	68.2%
USC Aiken	1018	1031	69.3%
USC Beaufort	1002	1023	66.1%
USC Upstate	995	1014	71.2%
Winthrop	1050	1087	72.2%
<b>Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions</b>	<b>1044</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>60.3%</b>
<b>Average Senior Institutions</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>59.7%</b>
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC</b>			
USC Lancaster	945	1019	67.8%
USC Salkehatchie	813	905	80.1%
USC Sumter	954	1024	68.9%
USC Union	849	884	77.3%
<b>Average USC Two-Year</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>72.7%</b>

<sup>1</sup> ACT scores converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT/SAT Concordance Tables.

<sup>2</sup> Changes to the format and scoring of the SAT made effective in 2017.

**Table 5** (p. 26) compares the SAT/ACT combined mean for each institution for the most recent five years. All but one public senior institution (Francis Marion) indicate an **increase** in the average combined SAT/ACT mean between 2016 and 2017. Although minimal, Francis Marion demonstrates a **decrease** of two points (-2). South Carolina State indicated the largest increase of 74 points followed by USC Beaufort (49 points) and Clemson (43 points).

When comparing the change in combined mean from 2013 to 2017, all but one public senior institution (College of Charleston) indicate an **increase** in the average combined SAT/ACT mean. College of Charleston demonstrates a **decrease** of five points (-5). Clemson and Francis Marion demonstrate a decrease from 2015 to 2016 but average an increase from 2012 to 2016. USC Columbia, Coastal Carolina, Lander, USC Aiken, and USC Beaufort demonstrate increases from 2015 to 2016, as well as the average from 2012 to 2016. The average combined SAT/ACT mean for public senior institutions in South Carolina increased by 29 points from 2016 to 2017 and by 37 points from 2012 to 2015. Except for Coastal Carolina, the same institutions that indicated the largest increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean between 2016 and 2017 (South Carolina State, USC Beaufort, and Clemson), also indicated the largest increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean between 2013 and 2017.

<b>Table 5</b> <b>SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen<sup>1</sup></b> <b>(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Students Age 22 and Above)</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions and USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>							
<b>Institution</b>	<b>2013 SAT/ACT Combined Mean</b>	<b>2014 SAT/ACT Combined Mean</b>	<b>2015 SAT/ACT Combined Mean</b>	<b>2016 SAT/ACT Combined Mean</b>	<b>2017 SAT/ACT Combined Mean</b>	<b>2016-2017 Change Combined Mean</b>	<b>2013-2017 Change Combined Mean</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>							
Clemson	1254	1264	1267	1264	1307	43	53
USC Columbia	1212	1218	1221	1236	1244	8	32
<b>Average Research Institutions</b>	<b>1229</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>1240</b>	<b>1247</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>							
The Citadel	1079	1083	1082	1060	1100	40	21
Coastal Carolina	1004	1001	1018	1031	1057	26	53
College of Charleston	1153	1141	1136	1112	1148	36	-5
Francis Marion	942	942	956	945	943	-2	1
Lander	979	985	983	990	1014	24	35
S.C. State	799	828	774	787	861	74	62
USC Aiken	986	988	988	993	1018	25	32
USC Beaufort	951	948	932	953	1002	49	51
USC Upstate	972	971	961	970	995	25	23
Winthrop	1037	1056	1044	1047	1050	3	13
<b>Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>1022</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>1044</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Average Senior Institutions</b>	<b>1118</b>	<b>1120</b>	<b>1124</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC</b>							
USC Lancaster	873	882	887	881	945	64	72
USC Salkehatchie	798	802	806	914	813	-101	15
USC Sumter	931	944	913	923	954	31	23
USC Union	834	799	751	762	849	87	15
<b>Average USC Two-Year</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>

<sup>1</sup> ACT scores converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT/SAT Concordance Tables.

<sup>2</sup> Changes to the format and scoring of the SAT made effective in 2017.

#### Part IV: Fall 2017 Provisionally Admitted Students

An institution may offer two types of admission to a degree-seeking student. Applicants who meet the institution's minimum admission criteria and who are offered admission are classified as regular students. Applicants who do not meet the institution's regular admission requirements but who are offered admission using alternative criteria are classified as provisional students.

**Table 6** shows provisional freshmen as a percent of total first-time entering freshmen in Fall 2017 for each public senior institution and the USC two-year regional campuses. Among the public senior institutions, eight indicated admitting "provisional" students, yet all, again, have first-time freshmen not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites. The number of institutions indicating the admission of provisional students **increased** from five in Fall 2016 to seven in Fall 2017 (CHE, 2018b). All but one institution, USC Columbia, reporting provisional students, were comprehensive teaching colleges and universities. The data suggests Winthrop admitted the largest percentage of provisional freshmen (8.4 percent), but a decrease of 3.6 percent from 2016 (CHE, 2018b). USC Upstate followed Winthrop with a percentage of 8.0, an increase from no provisional students in 2016. The same occurred for USC Columbia, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate. Clemson, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, and Lander do not report admitting any provisional first-time freshmen in 2017.

<b>Table 6</b> <b>Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen, Fall 2017</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions and USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>			
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Total First-Time Freshmen</b>	<b>Provisional First-Time Freshmen</b>	<b>Percent Provisional</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>			
Clemson	3,649	0	0.0%
USC Columbia	5,880	47	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,529</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>			
The Citadel	687	0	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	2,390	0	0.0%
College of Charleston	1,840	44	2.4%
Francis Marion	688	0	0.0%
Lander	765	0	0.0%
S.C. State	591	6	1.0%
USC Aiken	573	43	7.5%
USC Beaufort	487	24	4.9%
USC Upstate	879	70	8.0%
Winthrop	1,050	88	8.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,950</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	<b>19,479</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>			
USC Lancaster	320	0	0.0%
USC Salkehatchie	241	0	0.0%
USC Sumter	270	0	0.0%
USC Union	181	0	0.0%
<b>Total USC Two-Year</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20,491</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

Regarding provisional students, at a meeting on August 25, 1997, the Commission approved several recommendations for the institutions to consider (CHE 2012, 2014, 2017). Among these recommendations were two related to the data presented in **Table 6** (p. 27):

- Research universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 10 percent of the first-time entering freshman class.
- Four-year comprehensive teaching colleges and universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 15 percent of the first-time entering freshman class.

As evident by reviewing the data presented in Table 6, in 2017, all institutions adhered to the recommendations. Trend data for provisional admissions for the last five years for the public senior institutions is provided below in **Table 7**:

<b>Table 7</b> <b>Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions</b>						
<b>Institution</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>						
Clemson	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
USC Columbia	13.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>						
The Citadel	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>College of Charleston</b>	9.5%	10.1%	10.4%	6.8%	11.1%	6.4%
Francis Marion	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%
Lander	4.0%	3.5%	5.4%	4.1%	5.1%	0.0%
S.C. State	7.4%	7.1%	11.1%	13.0%	4.5%	1.0%
<b>USC Aiken</b>	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.8%
USC Beaufort	3.4%	2.0%	2.5%	1.7%	0.0%	2.7%
<b>USC Upstate</b>	6.5%	0.0%	5.9%	6.8%	0.0%	6.7%
Winthrop	12.0%	12.2%	9.1%	11.9%	12.0%	0.9%
<b>USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>						
Average Percentage of All Campuses	68.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%

The data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the comprehensive sector continues to fluctuate at several institutions over the last five years. As of this report, USC Columbia, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, and USC Upstate **increased** the percentage of provisional first-time freshmen by a range of 0.8 percent to 8.8 percent. Winthrop drastically **decreased** the number of provisionally admitted first-time freshmen from 12.0 percent, the largest percentage among SC public senior institutions in 2016, to the second smallest percentage in 2017 (0.9 percent). College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, South Carolina State University, and Winthrop admitted a smaller number of provisional students in 2017. All public senior institutions with provisionally admitted first-time freshmen remain below the recommended thresholds.

The University of South Carolina System consists of the Research 1 campus (USC Columbia), three comprehensive institutions that are separately funded and accredited (USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, and USC Upstate), as well as four two-year regional campuses (USC Lancaster, USC Salkehatchie, USC Sumter, and USC Union). It is important to note that, prior to the implementation of the Banner

enterprise system in fall 2013, when students applied to a regional campus, the application was compared to USC Columbia's admission standards. If the student was eligible for admission to Columbia yet desired admission to a specific regional campus, the student was classified as "baccalaureate-ready", indicating they were a USC Columbia-admissible student.

Regional (two-year) campus admitted students must earn a minimum 2.0 GPA and at least 30 hours to be able to change campuses to Columbia for most programs of study. Some may have higher GPAs and/or specific course requirements. USC reported that regional campuses do not provide remediation and the procedural change explains the large reduction in the number of first-time entering freshmen classified as provisional students for the USC two-year campuses over the past six years to non-existence (CHE, 2018b).

## **Part V: Fall 2017 Minimum Admission Standards**

A component of Act 629 of 1988 requires the Commission to work with public institutions of higher learning in South Carolina to ensure minimal admission standards are maintained by each institution. The publication and dissemination of minimal admission standards was recommended by external consultants who argued that unless students have a clear sense of institutional expectations, they could not rise to meet the expectations. In 1988, each institution was required to specify annually the minimum required SAT score (combined math and verbal) for admission as freshmen. In 1993, the Commission approved the collection of additional data to include minimum ACT scores if submitted in lieu of SAT scores.

It is important to note minimum admission standards are approximate. Some institutions apply a predictive equation to determine admission. At such institutions, the minimum required scores will vary depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the admissions formula. For this reason, the minimum SAT and ACT scores reported by the institutions as required for admission are to be used as guideposts for students aspiring to admission to any given institution.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen. Year after year, institutions report transitioning from the use of class rank to set the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score to the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the core high school college preparatory curriculum. To more accurately report the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score for institutions, the Commission requests information on which method institutions apply to set the minimum score and presents the results in this report. The required minimum SAT/ACT scores are, generally, lower for students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most institutions.

The data are separated into two tables indicating institutions that use class rank (**Table 8**, p. 30) and/or core GPA (**Table 9**, p. 31) to set the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score. Five institutions (Clemson, Francis Marion, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate) report the **application of both methods**, the same number of institutions as in 2016 (CHE, 2018b). USC Beaufort did not report any minimum SAT/ACT scores for high school class rank and GPA. Five other institutions, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Lander, and Winthrop, one less than in 2016, now report utilizing only the core GPA.

**Table 8** shows the approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by institution **using class rank** in Fall 2018. Three institutions (The Citadel, South Carolina State, and USC Aiken) require the same minimum SAT/ACT scores for students regardless of high school class rank. This is one less institution than in 2017.

Table 8 Admission Requirements Approximate Minimum SAT Score (Combined) and Minimum ACT Score Requirements for First-Time Entering Freshmen by High School Class Rank 2018								
Institution	High School Class Rank and Minimum SAT/ACT Scored						Predictive Equation <sup>1</sup>	
	Top 20% of Class		Top 50% of Class		Top 80% of Class			
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	Yes	No
Research Institutions								
Clemson	1120	23	1370	30	1590	36	X	
USC Columbia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	950	20	950	20	950	20		X
Coastal Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
College of Charleston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Francis Marion	860	16	880	17	960	18		X
Lander	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S.C. State	910	17	910	17	910	17		X
USC Aiken	800	17	800	17	N/A	N/A	X	
USC Beaufort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Upstate	930	18	980	19	980	19	X	
Winthrop	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Salkehatchie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Sumter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Union	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Some institutions use predictive equations, a formula combining high school class rank, high school grade point ratio, and SAT or ACT score, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required score will vary depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

" - " means not applicable.

**Table 9** shows the approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by institution **using core GPA** in Fall 2018. Two institutions, South Carolina State and Lander, require the **same** minimum SAT/ACT scores for entering students regardless of GPA. The SAT and ACT score requirements remained the same at Clemson, Coastal Carolina, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate as in Fall 2017 (CHE, 2018b). Lander and South Carolina State **increased** the minimum SAT required score for students entering in Fall 2018. On the other hand, Francis Marion added requirements for students with a core 2.0 GPA, increased the SAT requirement, and decreased the ACT requirement. Clemson, Coastal Carolina, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate accept a lower SAT and ACT score when accompanied by a higher GPA.

Table 9 Admission Requirements Approximate Minimum SAT Score (Combined) and Minimum ACT Score Requirements for First-Time Entering Freshmen by GPA 2018								
Institution	High School Core GPA and Minimum SAT/ACT Score						Predictive Equation <sup>1</sup>	
	Core GPA 2.0		Core GPA 3.0		Core GPA 4.0			
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	Yes	No
Research Institutions								
Clemson	1600	36	1340	29	1040	21	X	
USC Columbia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coastal Carolina	1040	20	980	19	940	18		X
College of Charleston	-	-	-	-	1100	22	X	
Francis Marion <sup>3</sup>	960	18	860	16	860	16		X
Lander	-	-	900	17	900	17	X	
S.C. State	910	17	910	17	910	17		X
USC Aiken	920	19	800	17	-	-	X	
USC Beaufort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Upstate	980	19	930	18	880	17	X	
Winthrop University	-	-	900	19	850	18		X
USC Two-Year Regional Campuses								
USC Lancaster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Salkehatchie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Sumter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USC Union	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Some institutions use predictive equations, a formula combining high school class rank, high school grade point ratio, and SAT or ACT score, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required score will vary depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

<sup>2</sup> At College of Charleston, an approximate minimum Combined SAT score of 1200 or an approximate minimum ACT score of 25 is required for admission based on a South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale (SCUGS) GPA of 3.9.

<sup>3</sup> At Francis Marion, a new freshman applicant who has a high school GPA of 2.3 or below may be presented to the Admissions, Advising, and Retention Committee for possible admittance if they have an SAT score of at least 1000 or an ACT score of at least 22.

" - " means not applicable.

" \* " means a new freshman applicant who has a high school GPA 2.3 or below may be presented to the Admissions, Advising, and Retention Committee for possible admittance if they have an SAT of at least 1080 or an ACT of at least 22.

In 2005, a mandatory writing/essay section was added to the SAT, creating a three SAT scores (Critical Reading, Math, and Writing) on a scale of 200 - 800 and amending the total perfect score to 2400 (The College Board, 2015). However, the essay became optional and scored separately with the SAT reverting to a maximum combined score of 1600, following an update in 2014. Since the redesign of the SAT in 2015, the essay component remains reported separately and not factored into the total score. As a result, considerations to include the SAT essay component as an admission requirement have continued to change. **Table 10** shows that over a decade later, in Fall 2018, SC public senior institutions **no longer** consider the essay component of the SAT in admission decisions. For students entering in Fall 2017, three institutions (Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, and USC Upstate) required the SAT writing component and used it as a factor in admission decisions (CHE, 2018b). Clemson, USC Columbia, College of Charleston, and Winthrop still use it as supplemental information in evaluating college readiness.

<b>Table 10</b>		
<b>Requirement of SAT Essay Component for Admissions in Fall 2018</b>		
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>		
Clemson	No	Supplemental information in a student's application. The writing component is not included in the predictive formula.
USC Columbia	No	Supplemental information in a student's application. The writing component is not included in the predictive formula.
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>		
The Citadel	No	
Coastal Carolina	No	Optional and not included in admission decisions.
College of Charleston	No	No longer requires the freshmen to submit the writing component of either the SAT or ACT, but it is highly recommended. When submitted it is considered as another source of information in evaluating the academic readiness of the student and is considered in combination with other qualitative and quantitative factors.
Francis Marion	No	
Lander	No	
S.C. State	No	
USC Aiken	No	
USC Beaufort	No	
USC Upstate	No	
Winthrop	No	Writing component is not included in admission decisions. It is reviewed for a possible correlation between freshmen students' performance in their first writing course.

First-time freshmen can also comprise adults attending college for the first time or embarking on a career change. Full-time undergraduate students 25 years of age or older are generally referred to as “nontraditional” students (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Nontraditional students make up a significant proportion of full time undergraduate students. In Fall 2015, students 25 years of age or older and enrolled in degree-granting public 4-year and 2-year postsecondary institutions comprised 11 and 23 percent, respectively, of full-time undergraduates (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Nontraditional students are unique in more characteristics than just age. They often are employed full-time (35 hours or more per week) while enrolled; financially independent as it relates to financial aid eligibility; responsible for dependents, including spouse, children, and/or sick or elderly family members; and/or single parents (not married or married, but separated) (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).



Thus, family and work responsibilities influence their time, energy, and financial resources while pursuing postsecondary education.

**Table 11** shows the number of first-time freshmen aged 25 or older, or “nontraditional students”, in the South Carolina public senior institutions and USC Two-Year Regional Campuses for the past five years. Since 2013, the number of first-time entering freshmen aged 25 and older has steadily declined for both categories of institutions. From Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, the number of first-time freshmen 25 years of age or older **remained relatively the same** with less than a 1 percent decrease. Again, the USC Two-Year Regional Campuses continue to admit a greater percentage of the non-traditional aged student population as in previous years. The Fall 2017 data for this subgroup is more inclusive. The definition of “first-time freshmen” allows for students to still be classified as first-time if the college credit or post-secondary award was earned prior to high school graduation, and/or they have credit for military service/training, any non-credit courses, the completion of tests/assessments, and life experience. This is consistent with the definition applied to other data tables in the report.

<b>Table 11</b> <b>Number of First-time Freshmen Aged 25 and Older by Year, Five-Year Comparison</b> <b>S.C. Public Senior Institutions and USC Two-Year Regional Campuses</b>						
<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Fall 2013<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Fall 2014<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Fall 2015<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Fall 2016<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>Research Institutions</b>						
Clemson	0	0	0	0	0	0
USC Columbia	2	0	3	1	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Comprehensive Teaching Colleges &amp; Universities</b>						
The Citadel	1	0	4	2	0	7
Coastal Carolina	4	3	3	2	4	16
College of Charleston	0	1	0	0	0	1
Francis Marion	0	4	2	0	2	8
Lander	0	0	1	0	1	2
South Carolina State	2	4	1	0	1	8
USC Aiken	4	0	1	3	0	8
USC Beaufort	4	2	2	3	2	13
USC Upstate	1	2	9	4	1	17
Winthrop	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC</b>						
USC Lancaster	19	11	5	8	7	50
USC Salkehatchie	45	10	15	6	7	83
USC Sumter	3	11	6	4	3	27
USC Union	20	16	3	0	3	42
<b>Total USC Two-Year</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>290</b>

<sup>1</sup> As reported in *Annual report on admission standards for first-time entering freshmen, Fall 2014* (CHE, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> As reported in *Annual report on admission standards for first-time entering freshmen, Fall 2015 and 2016* (CHE, 2018a and 2018b).

## Conclusion

The attached *Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshman, Fall 2017* provides findings from data reported by 12 South Carolina public senior colleges and universities regarding admission standards. In Fall 2017, the public senior institutions admitting freshmen in South Carolina received 109,747 applications from individuals, both in-state and out-of-state, seeking admission as first-time freshmen. Of the first-time freshmen applicants 63.6 percent (69,834) were offered admission, and 27.9 percent (19,479) of applicants offered admission accepted and enrolled. This is a one-half percent decrease among the applicants offered admission, and a one percent decrease among those that accepted and enrolled from Fall 2016. The majority of first-time freshmen attending South Carolina's 12 public senior institutions, in Fall 2017, are women (57.3 percent) and the Black/African American men and women composition of first-time freshmen remained relatively unchanged at 16.4 percent.

The number and percentage of applicable first-time freshmen meeting all the college preparatory course prerequisites continue to decrease, after increasing from 2013-2015. In Fall 2017, 85.1 percent of first-time freshmen met all the prerequisites compared to 88.7 percent in 2016, and 91.2 percent in 2015. Data indicates that among the public senior institutions, the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites slightly decreased from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Unlike Fall 2016, only half of the public institutions demonstrate decreases in freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites, while the other half indicates an increase in freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites. Retention rates among students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites are lower for over half of the public senior institutions. Four institutions indicate an increase in freshmen-to-sophomore retention rates for students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites, while seven institutions demonstrate a decrease in retention rates for the same category of students. The retention rate for students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites remained approximately the same for Clemson University.

Most students attending South Carolina public senior institutions report taking the ACT (10,847 students) rather than the SAT (7,504 students) as a college entrance examination in Fall 2017. All but one public senior institutions indicate an increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean between 2016 and 2017. Francis Marion demonstrates a decrease in the average combined SAT/ACT mean.

An institution may offer two types of admission to a degree-seeking student, regular or provisional. The classification is based on whether the applicant meets the institution's minimum admission criteria. Among the public senior institutions, seven of the twelve indicated admitting "provisional" students, yet all have first-time freshmen not meeting the college preparatory course prerequisites. Most of the institutions reporting provisional students, again, were comprehensive teaching colleges and universities in South Carolina. Winthrop admitted the largest percentage of provisional freshmen (8.4 percent), followed by USC Upstate (8.0 percent). Although the data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the comprehensive sector continues to fluctuate at several institutions, the levels remain below the 15 percent threshold CHE formally recommended at a commission meeting in August 1997.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen. The required minimum SAT/ACT scores are, generally, lower for students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most institutions. The minimum admission standards of the public senior institutions in South Carolina for Fall 2018 incorporate the use of both GPA and high school class rank. Five institutions

(Clemson, Francis Marion, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, and USC Upstate) report intent to apply both methods. USC Beaufort did not report any minimum SAT/ACT scores for high school class rank and GPA. Three institutions (The Citadel, South Carolina State, and USC Aiken) require the same minimum SAT/ACT scores for students regardless of high school class rank, and two institutions required the same minimum SAT/ACT scores for student regardless of GPA (South Carolina State and Lander). In addition to SAT/ACT scores, class rank, and GPA, considerations to include the SAT essay component as an admission requirement are constantly changing. SC public senior institutions no longer consider the essay component of the SAT in admission decisions. However, Clemson, USC Columbia, College of Charleston, and Winthrop still use it as supplemental information in evaluating college readiness.

## **Future Opportunities**

The 2017 *Annual Report on Admission Standards* reveals nontraditional students remain an untapped market for public postsecondary education. With the burgeoning South Carolina economy facilitated by an influx of jobs with the addition of new companies across various sectors, workforce development has renewed focus and has become a statewide priority. However, many business and industry representatives continue to indicate the emerging and existing workforce is not prepared or equipped with the necessary skills for initial employment and advancement. Institutions of higher learning are presented with an opportunity to align recruitment strategies, training, programs, and degrees to the labor market, staying attuned and responsive to workforce needs. The development of multiple career pathways that span educational institutions (access and affordability) is necessary so that students and job seekers can seamlessly transition and progress through high-quality education and training to high-demand, high-wage employment (excellence).

In addition to the inclusion and analysis of more demographic data, future iterations of the *Annual Report on Admission Standards* may include an in-depth examination of trend data of the various subject areas highlighted in the report, and definition for provisional admission is also an opportunity for development. Trend analysis allows for the assessment of patterns and changes over time, especially in student retention and persistence. The retention of all admitted students continues to be a topic that deserves more exploration.

Data-driven decision making, if successful, generates collaborative opportunities that can translate research and theory into best practice. This report can serve to inform our institutions and all stakeholders about gaps in our educational landscape and the support needed for all postsecondary students, but especially the underserved students, and can ignite further research. Commission staff intend to explore other issues related to admission standards in higher education, and ultimately increase student access and success, while enhancing institutional effectiveness.

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